

Appl. No. 10/801,617
Amdt. dated February 8, 2006
Reply to Office action of November 8, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant has received the Office action dated November 8, 2005, in which the Examiner: 1) rejected claims 1, 6-9, 16, 19-20, 22-23 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,905,873 ("Hartmann"); 2) rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pub. No. 2005/0147126 ("Qui") in view of Hartmann; 3) rejected claims 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Hartmann in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,266,713 ("Karanam"); 4) rejected claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartmann in view of U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0051024 ("Garnett"); 5) rejected claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartmann; 6) rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartmann in view of Garnett; 7) rejected claims 24-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartmann in view of Karanam; and 8) objected to claims 10-14 and 21 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but otherwise allowable.

With this Response, Applicant has amended claims 1, 8, 16, 22, 24-26. Also, Applicant has canceled claims 7, 9-10, 19 and 21. Claims 1-6, 8, 11-18, 20 and 22-26 are pending. Based on the amendments and arguments contained herein, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims.

I. CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claim 1 was amended to incorporate the limitations of canceled claim 7. Amended claim 1, in part, requires "a switch comprising a plurality of ports, each port is adapted to couple to an electronic device, wherein each port is configurable for use according to the protocol used by the electronic device coupled thereto." Claim 1 further requires "each port comprises a connector having separate data lines to send and receive data according to each of the plurality of communication protocols."

While Hartmann teaches a system with port adapters 502, protocols converters 566 and a cross-bar switch 570 (see Figs. 5-6 and col. 9, lines 1-47), Hartmann does not teach or suggest "a switch comprising a plurality of ports...each port comprises a connector having separate data lines to send and

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receive data according to each of the plurality of communication protocols" as required in claim 1. The Examiner cited Hartmann's Fig. 2 as teaching this limitation (see Office action, page 2, item 6). While Hartmann's Fig. 2 shows a serial communication subsystem 250 described as having "a traffic circle architecture which facilitates packet conversion and routing" (see col. 6, lines 51-56), Hartmann still does not teach or suggest Applicant's claimed "switch comprising a plurality of ports...each port comprises a connector having separate data lines to send and receive data according to each of the plurality of communication protocols" as required in claim 1. Hartmann does not even mention "a connector," much less "a connector having separate data lines to send and receive data according to each of the plurality of communication protocols" as required in claim 1. For at least these reasons, claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable.

Claim 8 was amended to incorporate the limitations of canceled claim 10. The Examiner previously indicated that claim 10 is allowable over the cited references. For at least these reasons, claim 8 and its dependent claims are allowable.

Claim 16 was amended to incorporate the limitations of canceled claim 21. The Examiner previously indicated the claim 21 is allowable over the cited references. For at least these reasons, claim 16 and its dependent claims are allowable.

Amended claim 22, in part, requires "a switch comprising a plurality of ports, each port adapted to couple to one of the plurality of electronic devices, the switch comprises also a crossbar coupled to the ports." Claim 22 further requires "each port comprises...means for separately receiving and separately outputting a serial data stream and a parallel data stream."

None of the references cited by the Examiner, considered individually or together, teach or suggest "a switch comprising a plurality of ports, each port adapted to couple to one of the plurality of electronic devices, the switch comprises also a crossbar coupled to the ports" and "each port comprises...means for separately receiving and separately outputting a serial data stream and a parallel data stream" as required in claim 22. The Examiner

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cites Qiu which teaches a bridge or adapter may be required to interface a PCI or PCI-X device to a PCI Express bus (see paragraph [0031]). Also, the Examiner cites Garnett which teaches serializer/deserializer (SERDES) devices (see Office action, page 6, item 21). Still, neither Qiu nor Garnett teach or suggest "a plurality of ports...each port compris[ing]...means for separately receiving and separately outputting a serial data stream and a parallel data stream" as required in claim 22. For at least these reasons, claim 22 and its dependent claims are allowable.


II. CONCLUSION

In the course of the foregoing discussions, Applicant may have at times referred to claim limitations in shorthand fashion, or may have focused on a particular claim element. This discussion should not be interpreted to mean that the other limitations can be ignored or dismissed. The claims must be viewed as a whole, and each limitation of the claims must be considered when determining the patentability of the claims. Moreover, it should be understood that there may be other distinctions between the claims and the cited art which have yet to be raised, but which may be raised in the future.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. It is believed that no extensions of time or fees are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Hewlett-Packard Development Company's Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

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